

CITY OF JERSEY CITY

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Jersey City to Celebrate 100 Years of Safer Drinking Water Together with United Water and NJAWWA, Jersey City was the first U.S. city to use chlorine disinfectant to destroy disease-causing germs in water

JERSEY CITY – Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy, the **Municipal Council**, **United Water**, and the **American Chemistry Council** will proudly celebrate “**100 Years of Chlorination: Jersey City**” during a reception from **7 to 9 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 24, 2008**, at the Liberty House Restaurant in Liberty State Park.

The anniversary celebration marks 100 years of chlorination in Jersey City, which was the first city in the nation to use the chlorination process to produce safe-drinking water.

Jersey City officials will be joined by state officials, as well members of the American Water Works Association, NJ Section of the AWWA, National Association of Water Companies, the Environmental Protection Agency and the NJ Department of Environmental. The commemoration will feature a Presidential and Gubernatorial Proclamation presented to Mayor Healy and United Water in recognition of Jersey City’s contribution to safe drinking water, as well as guest speakers from the Center for Disease Control and the American Chemistry Council.

“Providing a safe, reliable water supply in our lives and in our communities is a top priority,” said **Mayor Healy**. “A safe, reliable water supply is critical to the success of any community. It creates jobs, attracts industry and investment and provides for the health and welfare of citizens in ways ranging from disease prevention to fire suppression.”

The Jersey City Water Department was founded at the turn of the 20th Century. On September 26, 1908, the City of Jersey City became the first public water supply in the nation to begin the practice of disinfection. This was done with the introduction of sodium hypochlorite, commonly known as bleach. As a result, death and illness from typhoid fever became non-existent. By adding chlorine to the water supplies, it launched America’s reliance on chlorine to disinfect drinking water. This life saving technology was rapidly adopted by cities across the U.S., helping to virtually eliminate waterborne diseases such as cholera and typhoid. The widespread use of drinking water disinfection and filtration is recognized as one of the most important public health achievements in modern history.

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In 1996, United Water joined with Jersey City to form the nation's largest public-private partnership for a municipal water operation. United Water operates the distribution system, treatment plants, reservoirs and watershed, provides billing and collection and manages customer service for the Jersey City Municipal Utilities Authority. Jersey City continues to own its assets while controlling water rates and capital funding.

“Together with United Water and my administration, we are working diligently to keep our water safe for consumption and to extend the availability of clean water to all our residents,” continued **Mayor Healy**. “We have some of the highest quality water in the world and much of the credit goes to the local water treatment plants for their outstanding compliance records and we will strive to keep it that way.”

Today, Jersey City continues to be a trend setter in the water supply industry. The drinking water professional is faced with a dizzying array of new treatment systems. The explosive expansion of chlorine disinfection of water supplies by other cities after the Jersey City revolution is unique in the history of water utility adoption of new treatment technologies. Together with Jersey City and industry organizations like the AWWA and the American Chemistry Council, United Water is committed to continuing to explore opportunities for the advancement of the quality and safety of the drinking water to the people of Jersey City and worldwide.

United Water Resources is a subsidiary of Suez Environment, a global leader in energy, water and waste services. United Water seeks to be the premier water services company in North America. United Water provides water and wastewater services to 7 million people in the United States. In addition to owning and operating regulated utilities, United Water Resources operates municipal water and wastewater systems through public-private partnerships and contract agreements. Their corporate logo, the water star, symbolizes our mission to be premier. The individual drops represent what we strive to provide our customers – pure, clean water and stellar service. The United Water public private partnership is the recipient of the National Council for Public-Private Partnership's prestigious Project Recognition Award.

“So the next time you enjoy a refreshing glass of water from the tap,” said Robyn Ashmen, Strategic Marketing Manager of United Water. “You might want to offer a toast to what has been helping to keep drinking water safe and American families healthy since 1908.”

All media inquiries should be directed to Jennifer Morrill, Press Secretary to Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy at 201-547-4836 or 201-376-0699.///